SIMONDS, F.
WASHINGTON, D.C. DEATH MASK

DRAWER 23

SCULPTORS - S
(CASTS)

71.2009.085.03120

Statues of Abraham Lincoln

F. Simonds

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

71.2009.085.03120

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BISHOP PAPER COMPANY

545 Pearl Street
New York

April 20, 1936

Mr. F. S. Rouzer
Lincoln National Life Ins. Co.
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Dear Mr. Rouzer:

Leaving our paper business for a moment I would like to ask your opinion on a personal matter. Your Company, I believe, has a collection of Lincoln relics. I own a bronze medallion of Lincoln made from his death mask while he laid in state in the Capitol. The privilege to do this was extended by the Government to F. Simonds, sculptor, and my grandfather who was a metallist My grandfather fashioned this in bronze and made only three, one of which hangs in Parliament in London, the other in some public building in Washington and the third which I own. Do you think this has any value and would any one in your company be competent to express an opinion about it. If this is not imposing upon you I shall appreciate whatever information you might have.

Yours very truly,

H. F. Miller

(This is an excerpt)

April 23, 1936

Mr. H. F. Miller
Bishop Paper Company
545 Pearl Street
New York, New York

My dear Mr. Miller:

Your letter of April 20 directed to Mr. F. S. Rouzer has been called to the attention of the Lincoln National Life Foundation, which is sponsored by the Company.

We are always interested in any items relating to Lincoln which do not appear in our collection and from that you say, I feel quite sure the Lincoln medallion must be unique. More so indeed would be the mask itself if it is still available. It would be very difficult, however, for anyone to appraise the item you have inasmuch as apparently none similar to it have passed through any auction or sale market.

We would be very much interested indeed in having a somewhat fuller description as to size, shape, etc., which would give us an opportunity to visualize it. We would also be interested to know if the sculptor's name appears on the medallion.

We would be very glad to hear from you with respect to these items, although I am quite sure we would not be able to make an appraisal as this department is prohibited from making appraisals on Lincoln items.

Very truly yours,

Director

LAW:AAM

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BISHOP PAPER COMPANY

INCORPORATED

7-11 LAIGHT STREET

NEW YORK

June 17, 1936.

Mr. Louis A. Warren,
Lincoln National Life Foundation,
Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Dear Sir;

After receiving your letter of April 23, I started to collect further information about the medallion of Lincoln made by my Grandfather. At the Anderson Galleries the work was known and while some other articles of my Grandfather had passed through them, they had never seen my medallion. The only visible evidence I could find substantiating the family legend about the mask being taken while the body laid in state is a newspaper clipping from The Philadelphia Inquirer of April 18, 1870 in which it was stated in part, "Mr. Miller had access to the body while it laid in state at the Capitol".

The medallion is about two feet in diameter. I do not know where the mask is but the Anderson Galleries believe it is the only death mask taken. Several life masks are known. The sculptors name appears with my Grandfathers., It is F. Simmonds.

We are hanging the medallion at the exhibit at the Lincoln Hotel in New York. It will be on view there after June 19th. Of course collectors will see it and if there should be an interest in buying it I may let it go if the price justifies it.

I have a picture of the medallion and if you would like to see it I will mail it to you.

Yours very truly,

H. F. Miller

HFM.M

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June 22, 1936

Mr. H. F. Miller
Bishop Paper Company
7-11 Leight Street
New York, New York

My dear Mr. Miller:

We are very grateful to you for your information about the death mask of Lincoln and we most certainly would be pleased to have a picture of the medallion which you have loaned to the Lincoln Hotel in New York City.

Enclosed you will please find a bulletin which I prepared some four years ago on the Life and Death Masks of Lincoln, which I think would be of interest to you and, of course, I should like to file any information available about the mask made by your granffather.

Very truly yours

LAW:LH
Enc.

Director

July 2, 1941

Mr. H. F. Miller
Bishop Paper Company
7-11 Leight St.
New York, N. Y.

My dear Mr. Miller:

Several years ago we corresponded with you with reference to a Lincoln medalion which you have in your possession made, I believe by your grandfather.

We are wondering if you have ever disposed of this medalion and if not, whether you are interested in its disposition. May we hear from you at your convenience.

Very truly yours,

LAW:RST

Director

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HOBSON MILLER PAPER
CORPORATION
TELEPHONE-WALKER-5-8344-5-6
CABLE ADDRESS-HOBSONMILL
415 GREENWICH STREET
NEW YORK

July 10, 1941

Mr. Louis A. Warren
Lincoln National Life Foundation
Fort Wayne
Indiana

Dear Mr. Warren:

The Lincoln medalion made by my grandfather is now hanging in my home. I have no desire to dispose of it. In fact when it got out of the family it was most difficult for us to trace and repossess it. As you may know there are only two others in existence. You may also know that my grandfather obtained permission to take a death mask of President Lincoln when he lay in state and nothing else like this medalion has been made.

If, for some special Lincoln Commemoration, you should desire to exhibit it for a limited period of time I should be very happy to loan it to you but, as stated before, I have no desire to dispose of it as we prize it very highly.

Yours very truly

H F Miller

HFM/ab

DEATH MASK

August 1, 1941.

Mr. Hobson F. Miller
Hobson Miller Paper
415 Greenwich St.
New York, N. Y.

My dear Mr. Miller:

I now fear that I was rather presumptuous in writing you with reference to the acquisition of the medalion in your possession and in your letter to me on June 17, 1936 you said "I may let it go if the price justifies it," and that was the line that attracted my attention as I was checking through my suspense file.

There is quite a bit of discussion just at the present as to whether or not a death mask was ever made of Abraham Lincoln and I think your testimony contributes very much to the probability that there was such a mask made.

Do you happen to have a copy of the clipping from the Philadelphia Inquirer of April 18, 1870. If so, might I borrow it and have it photostated?

I would also like very much to know if you have a portrait of the medalion. If so, we would like to make a copy of this if you do not object. I think your letter of June 17, 1936 carries with it an offer to send it for our observation, the picture, I mean.

I am now preparing a little monograph on bronze plaques of Abraham Lincoln and should like very much to use the story of yours if you do not object.

Very truly yours,

LAW:BST

Director

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Photo of Death Mask
with compliments of
Geo. W. Churchwell

SIMONDS, F.
WASHINGTON, D.C. DEATH MASK

DRAWER 23

SCULPTORS - S
(CASTS)